body ordered to leave Peking within twenty-four hours. It has been claimed that on June 24th the Empress Dowager, goaded by a forged note from the foreign ministers demanding her abdication, ordered the extermination of all aliens in an edict sent broadcast throughout the Empire—thus in effect declaring war against the world. The evidence for the existence of this document, however, has been seriously called into question.

For several days Westerners and Japanese in Peking had been in a virtual state of siege. On the morning of June 20th, the German Minister was killed while on his way to the Tsungli Yamen, and that afternoon foreigners and Chinese Christians were placed in a real state of siege in their refuges—the Roman Catholic cathedral and the legation quarter. The powers assembled at Tientsin an allied relief expedition, but not until the middle of August did it fight its way through to Peking and effect the release of the beleaguered.

In the meantime, the storm brought great distress outside as well as inside the capital. Throughout the Empire aliens were in danger, especially missionaries, for by the nature of their calling the latter were more frequently beyond the shelter of the treaty ports than were merchants. Most foreigners in the interior found it necessary either to go to the ports or to leave the country entirely. Except in the Northeast very little loss of life occurred. In Chihli (Hopei), Shansi, Manchuria, and Mongolia, however, the toll was heavy. Here more than two hundred foreign missionaries and several thousand Chinese Christians were killed. In Shansi the truculent Yii Hsien was particularly rabid against

the strangers and their converts, and personally assisted in the execution of one of the Roman Catholic bishops.

That the loss of life was no greater was due in large part to the Chinese and Manchus themselves. At the court were those, among them Jung-lu, who recognized the folly of the war, and their moderating counsels were not without effect—even during the siege of the legations. In local communities many Chinese, both private citizens and officials, risked their lives to save foreigners.

On June 20th the admirals off Tientsin declared that they were using force merely against the Boxers and those who opposed them in their attempt to rescue their fellow-countrymen in Peking. This meant that the powers did not consider themselves at war